

A Brief Chronological Summary of Vermont Prehistory
(Prepared by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation)

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Periods</u>	<u>Main Characteristics</u>
A.D. 1675	Early Historic	Villages near the lake and on the floodplains of the four major rivers in the Champlain Valley and the Connecticut Valley on the Great Oxbow near Newbury as well as near where Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts meet; farming, carried out near villages, supplements food gained by hunting, fishing and gathering for which small camps were established on various lakes, ponds, streams, and in the uplands; tool kit much as before, but arrow and spearpoints sometimes of metal, accompanied by incised pottery, wampum and European trade goods.
A.D. 1609	Late Woodland	Settlement and subsistence as before, but with addition ca 1450 of limited farming: underground pits for storage of harvest enables people to occupy villages in cold winter months; tool kit much as before but ceramics change as pottery with various combinations of cord, dentate, trailed and incised designs gives way to incised and castellated types.
Ca. A.D. 1000	Late	Subsistence and settlement as before; decline of long distance trade marked by tools made almost exclusively of local materials; marked decline in quality of ceramics which became standardized, with cord impressed and circular punctuate

Ca. A.D. 800	Middle Woodland Intermediate	<p>stamped decoration predominant; standardized Levanna triangles now the predominant form of arrow and spear point</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Existing seasonal cycle of hunting, fishing and gathering continue, but now with regular warm season coming together of small groups into substantial villages on the lower reaches of the major rivers in the Champlain Valley, and probably at places along the Connecticut River as well; long distance trade continues as local tools are often made of "foreign" cherts and jaspers; ceramic vessels less "standardized" with decorative stamping usually confined to neck and lip; tools include Jack's Reef corner notched spear (and arrow?) points.</p> <p>-----</p>
Ca. A.D. 500	early	<p>Existing seasonal cycle of hunting, fishing and gathering continues; elaborate burial ceremonialism declines, but long distance trade - now in materials used for making utilitarian objects- continues; pottery vessels especially well made feature pseudo-scallop shell decoration over most of exterior and closely resembles pottery made elsewhere in the northeast as far afield as the Susquehanna Valley and Southwestern Ontario.</p>
Ca. A.D. 1		<p>Existing seasonal cycle of hunting, fishing and gathering continues, but with new styles of spear point; pottery vessels appear, and long distant trade reaches its height, bringing in objects from as far afield as the Ohio Valley and southern Atlantic coast. Elaborate cemeteries containing exotic artifacts in the Champlain Valley may mark beginning of a tendency</p>

	Early Woodland	for small groups to come together periodically along the lower reaches of the major rivers, if only to bury those who had died over the winter. Artifacts include Adena and Meadowood spear points, vinette 1 pottery, blocked-end tubular pipes, boatstones, birdstones, copper and shell beads and ovoid to triangular stone "cache" blades.
Ca. 500 B.C. Ca. 2525 B.C. (2000 b.c.)	Late Archaic Period	<p>Transformation of Vergennes Archaic as new elements are added, some older elements are dropped, and others altered. New elements include a variety of small, thick notched and stemmed points that are replaced (after ca. 1800 B.C.) by broad bladed ones; soapstone bowls and elaborate "Glacial Kame" burials appear by end of period; Gone are Brewerton and Otter Creek points, ulus and ground slate points. In spite of changes in outward appearance, basic way of life little changed from before.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Vergennes Archaic emerges as new types of implements are adopted from peoples living to the south and west, and as ground slate and bone tools are introduced from the Maritime Archaic, possibly through an influx of peoples, from the east. Apparent emphasis on hunting and fishing, with small campsites located near streams and ponds. Prominence of heavy woodworking tools suggests construction of dugout canoes; other tools include Brewerton and Otter Creek spear points, spear thrower weights, plummets and ulus (semi-lunar knives).</p>
Ca. 4850 B.C. (4000 b.c.)	Middle Archaic Period	Little known; small scattered populations evidently remain in Vermont, adjusting to life in forests beginning to take on the characteristics of those of the recent past. Tools include Neville-like spear points.
Ca. 5500 b.c.	Early Archaic Period	Small scattered populations remain in Champlain Valley and perhaps the Connecticut; small sites include fishing and hunting camps occupied for short periods of time. Tools include spear thrower

		weights, notched pebble sinkers, large ovoid knives reminiscent of Late Archaic ulus. Swanton Corner-notched points reminiscent of Late Archaic Brewerton points, and bifurcate-based points possibly ancestral to Swanton corner-notched type.
Ca. 7000 b.c.	Paleoindian period	First people arrive in Champlain Valley ca. 9300 b.c. perhaps somewhat later in Connecticut Valley; concentration of small sites in proximity to Champlain Sea suggests utilization of marine resources; in addition, small groups of highly mobile people hunted caribou and probably other species over a landscape not unlike those of arctic regions today. Tools include fluted and (after ca. 8000 b.c.) unfluted styles of spear point and spurred scrapers, often made of high quality stone.

*Lower case b.c. = radiocarbon years

Upper case B.C. and A.D. = Calendar years